Department of State

TELEGRAM

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CONFIDENTIAL 554

10-15-67 Saigon 8881

PAGE 01 SAIGON 08881 181805Z

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INFO GPM 03,SC 01,RSC 01,USIA 12,H 02,NSC 10,L 03,INR 07,P 04,CIA 04,
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9496
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 8881

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

SUBJ: LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS:
THE ISSUES IN BIEN HOA

REF: SAIGON 8254

(1) 1. FOLLOWING IS INFORMAL ANALYSIS OF PARTISAN CAMPAIGN MATERAL DISTRIBUTED BY CANDIDTES FOR LOWER HOUSE IN BIEN HOA. ALTHOUGH A VERY LIMITED SAMPLING, THERE IS EVIDENCE THATA SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF CANDIDATES ARE ADDRESSING THEMSELVES TO SPECIFIC AND SOMETIMES CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS.

2. IN INFORMAL SURVEY ON AFTERNOON 16 OCT EMBOFF

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PA SAIGON 8881 181805Z

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 8881 C O N F I D E N T I A L
FOUND POSTERS ON DISPLY ON TWETY-NINE OF THIRTY BIEN HOA PROVINE CANDIDATES. THIRTIETH CANDIDATE, CHOLON BUSINESSMAN TRUONG VAN NGHI, IS SAID TO HAVE WITHDRAWN. APPEALS OF CANDIDATES ARE SOMEWHAT MORE SPECIFIC THAN DURING CA ELECTIONS A YEAR AGO. AVERAGE FOR ALL CANDIDATES IS 5.6 PROMISES PER POSTER; THE ELEVEN CATHOLIC ANDIDATES AVERAGED SIX CAMPAIG PLANKS AND THE EIGHTEEN NON-CATHOLICS AVERAGED 5.3. PROVINCE COUNCILMAN VU VAN SO LEADS WITH THIRTEEN SPECIFICA PROMISES, ON THE OTHER HAND, YOUNG CATHOLIC JOURNALIST PHAM HUU GIAO HAS WON APPROVING COMMENTS BY ANNOUNCING THAT HE INTENDS TO MAKE NO PROMISES. (GIAL NEVERTHELESS LISTS SEVEN ASPIRATIONS.")

3. ELECTORATE, AS USUAL, QUITE CRITICAL OF THOSE "WHO PROMISE THE PEOPLE MUCH BUT DO NOTHING." SOUNDINS IN III CROPS INDICATE, AS ELSEWHERE, THAT CA DEPUTIES ARE BEING CRTIICIZED ON THIS ACCOUND. NEARLY ALL FORMER DEPUTIES FROM III CORPS ARE DESCRIBED AS HAVING SUFFERED GREAT LOSS IN PRESTIGE AND A NUMBER, INCLUDING DO HUU QUON (BIEN HOA),

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 8881 C O N F I D D E N T I A L
PHAM DINH HUNG (BINH DUONG) AND NGUYEN VAN HUNG (BINH TUY) ARE SAID TO HAVE WITHDRAWN ON THIS ACCOUND. FURTHER, CA DEPUTIS NGUEYN HUU HIEU (PHUOC TUY) AND LY THANH LE (BINH LONG) APPEAR LIKELY TO LOSE IN THEIR LOWER HOUSE BIDS.

4. ANALYSIS OF BIEN HOA POSTERS SHOWS THAT THIRTEEN OF THE TWENTY-NINE CANDIDATES HAVE LIMITED THEMSELVES TO NON-CONTROVERSIAL THEMES. PROMOTION OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WELFARE WINS GENERAL APPROVAL; BEING MENTIONED ON THE POSTERS OF NINETEEN CANDIDATES. ESTABLISHMENT OF "REAL DEMOCRACY" ALSO FINDS FAVOR (THIRTEEN MENTIONS), AS DOES RAISING THE STANDARD OF LIVING (12), HELPING FARMERS AND RURAL AREAS (10), PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (8), PEACE (WITH QUALIFICATIONS SUCH AS PEACE WITH HONOR, PEACE WITH FREEDOM, ETC.) (10) AND HELPING LABOR (6).

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Department of State

TELEGRAM

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 3 SAIGON 6881 1818 5Z

6. MORE VENTURESOME GROUP OF SIXTEEN CANDIDATES TEND TO BE MORE SPECIFIC AND TO MAKE MORE PROMISES, AVERAGING 7.3 PLANKS EACH. THIS CATEGORY INCLUDES THOSE POSTER APPEALS WHICH MAY BE CONSSTURED AS BEING CRITICAL OF GVN PERFOR-

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 6881 C O N F I D E N T I A L
MANCE, SUCH AS CALLS FOR "JUSTICE" SEEN ON TWELVE CANDIDATES' POSTERS. ONLY OCCASIONALLY SPELLED OUT, THIS KEY WORD IS UNDERSTOOD BY MOST TO MEAN PROTECTION AGAINST ILLEGAL ARREST, CALL FOR RATIONAL DRAFT POLICIES, FREEDOM FROM UNJUST TAXES OR LEVIES, INDEMNIFICATION FOR PROPERTY DESTRUSTION, AND SO FORTH. FOUR CANDIDATES CALL FOR SPEEDY PAYMENT OF WAR DAMANGE COMPENSATION AND TWO SPECIFICALLY COMPLAIN ABOUT DEFOLIATION. FIVE CANDIDATES, APPARENTLY ANGLING FOR BUDDHIST VOTES, CALL FOR NON-INTERFERENCE WITH RELIGIOUS GROUPS; TWO OF THESE ALSO CALLED FOR "PEACE" WITHOUT ANY QUALIFICATION. LATTER APPEAL IS INTERPRETED BY EDUCATED VIETNAMESE TO MEAN "PEACE AT ALMOST ANY PRICE". OTHER NOTEWORTHY PLANKS WERE OPPOSITION TO CORRUPTION (ELEVEN MENTIONS), CALLS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OR SHAKEUP OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT (5), AND TWO DEMANDS THT ECONOMIC AID BE ADMINISTERED PROPERALY AND JUSTLY.

7. DIVISION BETWEEN CANDIDATES CRITICAL OF GVN AND THOSE WHO PLAY IT SAFE APPEARS UNRELATED TO CATHOLIC REFUGEE - "NATIVE" DIVISION NOTED IN REFTEL, ALTHOUGH CATHOLICS APPEAR SOMEWHAT MORE DARING. SEVEN OF ELEVEN CATHOLIC CANDIDATES ADVANCE CONTROVERSIAL PLANKS AND ONLY SIX OF THE FOURTEEN "NATIVES" DO SO. NON-CATHOLIC CANDIDATES TEND TO EMPHASIZE CONCERN FOR RURAL AREAS, ASSISTANCE TO SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES, AND RESPECT FOR RELIGION. CATHOLIC HOPEFULS, ON THE OTHER HAND, EXHIBIT CONCERN FOR "PEACE WITH HONOR AND FREEDOM," AND FOR PROTECTION OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY AND UNITY. BALANCING THE TWO CANDIDATES WHO ADVANCE UNQUALIFIED PEACE PLANKS ARE TWO CATHOLIC CANDIDATES WHO CONDEMN THOSE "WHO SOW DIVISION IN NATINAL RANKS".

8. OF CANDIDATES GIVEN GOOD CHANCE TO WIN, TRAN MINH NHUT AND LIEM THAT TRUONG, BOTH RUMORED TO BE GVN AVORITIES,

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Department of State **TELEGRAM**

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 SAIGON 08881 181805Z

FALL INTO THE "SAF " CAMP, AS MIGHT BE EXPECTED. ALSO NON-CONTROVERSIAL ARE EX-DISTRICT CHIEF CAO VAN CUA AND III CORPS REFUGEE INSPECTOR MAJOR PHAM GIA THUY. THE BORADLY DEFINED DISSIDENT CAMP INCLUDES PROVINCE COUNCIL HAIRMAN HO VAN TAM, SAIGON LAWYER NGUYEN KHAC TAN, UNION LEADER PHAM QUOC THAI AND MILITARY SECURITY SERVICE MAJOR NGUEYEN HUU CHINH.

PAGE 5 RUMJIR 8888 C O N F I D E N T I A L
8. NOTEWORTHY (ALTHOUGH ALMOST CERTAIN ALSO RANS ARE "WOMENS RIGHTS" CANDIDATE MRS. NGUYEN THI HUOT, CHINESE TEACHER TRUONG DUC, WHO IS RUNNING ON THE SINGLE PLANK OF SINO-VIETNAMESE AMITY, AND TRAN MAI LUAN, WHO DECLARES THAT ALL OF VIETNAM'SPROBLEMS CAN BE SOLVED "IF PEOPLE WILL ONLY LOVE ONE ANOTHER MORE."

9. LITTLE OVERY ANTI-AMERICANISXM IS EVIDENT IN THE BIEN HOA POSTERS, ALTHOUGH THIS CAN BE READ INTO MOST OF THE PLANKS DEAKING WITH NATIONAL RIGHTS AND SOVEREIGNTY (NINE CANDIDATES), AS WELL AS THOSE DEMANDING RAPID COMPSNSATION FOR WAR DAMAGES (4) AND A CRACKDOWN ON VICE AND CORRUPTING (1)

10. FINALLY, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT "PEACH" THEMSE IS MUTED IN SMEI-URBANIZED, RELATIVELY SECURE AND HEAVILY CATHOLIC BIEN HOA. AN LONG AN, WHICH EMBOFF ALSO VISITED RECENTLY, A QUICK READING OF POSTERS SHOWED HALF A DOZEN WITH STRONG PEACE APPEALS IN FIELD OF TWENTY. SOME PERMUT-ATION OF DOVE SYMBOL ALSO APPEARS IN LONG AN, BUT NO BIEN HOA CANDIDATE HAS USED IT.
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